

## Policy 1.1.4

### Use of State Resources

**Contact:** Human Resources Manager

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#### 1.1.4.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to DIS employees their limitations and responsibilities for proper use of state resources in general, information technology resources in general, and specifically telephones, computers, electronic message systems, and the Internet. The same limitations and responsibilities apply to contractors who use state resources in performing services for DIS.

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#### 1.1.4.2 Definitions

**"State resources"** include, but are not limited to, information technology assets such as computers, workstations, data resources, electronic message systems, software, software licenses, SCAN service, fax machines, telephones, cellular phones and Internet connections or accounts; state contracts; documentation; copyrighted material; photocopiers; facilities; vehicles; credit cards; supplies; and the state mail service.

**"Electronic message systems"** means electronic mail (E-mail) systems which store and transmit communications; voice mail systems which store and transmit voice communications; facsimile and imaging equipment which store and transmit images; and all similar systems.

**"Internet"** means the connection to and use of interconnected networks in the public and private domains to access the World Wide Web, Gopher, file transfer protocols, and other network resources.

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#### 1.1.4.3 State Resources Generally

DIS employees who use state-owned resources are responsible for using the resources in an ethical, legal, and conservative manner. There are two distinct uses of state resources: (1) uses necessary to an employee's conduct of official duties; and (2) uses for a purpose other than the conduct of official duties.

When using state resources for a purpose other than the conduct of official duties, DIS

employees, under any circumstances, are strictly prohibited from using state resources where that use involves: (1) state property that has been removed from an official duty station; (2) any campaign or political use; (3) conduct of an outside job or business; (4) supporting, promoting, or soliciting for an outside organization or group, unless provided for by law or authorized by the Director or designee; or (5) illegal or inappropriate activities, including, but not limited to, activities that violate any DIS policy.

Employees are not to allow others, such as family members and friends, to use state resources under their control. State regulations prohibit employees from using state resources for personal purposes and then reimbursing the state for the cost incurred. If a violation of these regulations occurs, the employee will be required to reimburse DIS, but the reimbursement does not cure the violation.

DIS employees may, within their own discretion and as directed by their supervisor, use state resources to conduct their official duties.

So long as the use does not involve one of the prohibited purposes described above, DIS employees may make use of state resources for a purpose other than the conduct of official duties if the use:

- a) Results in little or no cost to the state;
- b) Is infrequent;
- c) Is brief in duration;
- d) Is the most effective use of time and resources;
- e) Does not interfere with the performance of official duties;
- f) Does not disrupt other state employees;
- g) Does not obligate other state employees to make a personal use of state resources; and
- h) Does not compromise the security or integrity of state property, information, or software.

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#### **1.1.4.4 Telephone service**

DIS-owned telephones are provided to DIS employees for conducting state business. Employees may make occasional but limited use of telephone service for their own benefit provided that the use conforms to the limited personal use standards described above in 1.1.4.3. If employees must make personal local or long distance calls during their regularly scheduled work hours, these should be made at lunch or break times. Personal long distance calls shall not be made in a way that results in charges to DIS, except that employees on travel status may place brief (10 minutes or less) calls to their homes or families to communicate safe arrivals and changes in itinerary. Employees are trusted to exercise good judgment in both duration and frequency of such occasions.

Cellular phones are provided to DIS employees who have a demonstrated business need

for them. DIS-owned cellular phones and services are to be used to conduct state business only. Employees may not install a personal line on a state cellular telephone, even if the employee plans to be billed directly for the line and for any calls made on that line.

Charges for use of cellular phones are usually higher than conventional, wire-based telephone systems. Employees should not use cellular phones when a less costly alternative is safe, convenient, and readily available.

If a DIS employee leaving state service has state-owned cellular equipment installed in a private vehicle, he or she may elect to purchase the equipment from DIS when its removal would damage the vehicle or when the cost of removal exceeds the value of the cellular equipment. The fixed assets officer will determine the fair market value of the equipment.

Because cellular transmissions are not secure, employees should refrain from using them to relay confidential information.

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#### **1.1.4.5 Computers**

All DIS-owned computers, including without limitation desktop, laptop, and palmtop personal computers as well as DIS' mainframes and other platforms, are provided to DIS employees for conducting state business. Employees are not to install or use on DIS computers any software that does not further state business purposes, such as games software. Employees may make occasional but limited use of computers for their own benefit provided that the use conforms to the limited personal use standards described above in 1.1.4.3.

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#### **1.1.4.6 Electronic Message Systems**

DIS electronic message systems are provided to DIS employees as productivity tools for conducting state business. Employees may make occasional but limited use of electronic message systems for their own benefit provided that the use conforms to the limited personal use standards described above in 1.1.4.3.

Electronic message systems may not be secure. Employees should consider the potential insecurity of electronic messages before transmitting private or confidential messages.

Disclosure may occur intentionally or inadvertently when an unauthorized user gains access to electronic messages. Disclosure may occur when messages are forwarded to unauthorized users, directed to the wrong recipient or printed in a common area where others can read them.

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#### **1.1.4.7 Internet**

Access to the Internet is provided to DIS employees as a research and communication tool for conducting state business. Employees may make occasional but limited use of Internet access for their own benefit provided that the use conforms to the limited personal use standards described above in 1.1.4.3.

The Internet may not be secure. Employees should take this into account before receiving or transmitting information and messages. Employees should be aware that it is possible to identify visitors to Internet sites, and should exercise conservative judgment when accessing information on the Internet.

Employees are discouraged from downloading software from the Internet. When there is a clear business reason for downloading software, anti-virus programs should be used to detect and cure infection of the DIS environment.

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#### **1.1.4.8 No Expectation of Privacy**

DIS has the right to access, inspect, or monitor any state resource and any DIS employee's use of a state resource. DIS employees cannot expect privacy in their use of state resources, whether that use is one made in their conduct of official duties or is a use made for a purpose other than the conduct of official duties. This applies to all state resources, including, but not limited to, offices, desks, cabinets, telephones, voice mail, electronic mail, computer hard drives, storage lockers, computer H: drives, and the Internet.

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#### **1.1.4.9 Review of Electronic Messages**

While DIS does not regularly monitor electronic messages, such as E-mail notes, voice messages, or transmissions over the Internet, employees are on notice that:

- The maintenance and operation of electronic message systems may result in observation of random messages.
  - Managers may access data under employees' control to conduct state business or to prevent misuse.
  - Managers with assistant director approval may monitor messages during the course of investigating improper or illegal activity.
  - DIS may monitor and restrict employee use of the Internet through a gateway or proxy server.
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#### **1.1.4.10 Electronic Documents as Public Records**

Certain electronic documents, including mail messages composed or transmitted on the DIS network or the Internet, constitute public records which must be retained and preserved, and which may be disclosed to requesters. E-mail is a public record when it is created or received in the transaction of state business and retained as evidence of official policies, actions, decisions or transactions. E-mail that is a public record must be identified, scheduled and retained just like records in other formats. For more information regarding E-mail as public records, see General Records Retention Schedule 17, Electronic Mail.

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#### **1.1.4.11 Use of State Computer Equipment at Home**

Employees may use agency computer equipment at home upon approval of their supervisor. Recognized uses of state computer equipment include but are not limited to: telecommuting pursuant to a written telecommuting agreement; remote access to a state network for employment-related purposes, such as network maintenance, troubleshooting or repair, and supervisory functions. Prior to taking state computer equipment home, an employee and his/her supervisor shall prepare a written agreement (a template Justification Form/Written Agreement is linked in the References section below) describing why home use of the equipment is required, that the employee has read and understands the policies regarding use of state resources, and the tasks which the employee will perform with the equipment. The agreement shall be signed by the employee, the employee's supervisor, and the divisional manager. Such an agreement shall be valid for no longer than one year, and must then be renewed by mutual agreement between the employee and supervisor. Employees' use of state computer equipment at home is subject to the same ethics rules as would be applicable were the employee making use of the same state computer equipment at a state facility.

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#### **1.1.4.12 Sanctions**

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

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#### **References**

Ethics Board Advisory Opinion 00-03; Supplemental Advisory Opinion 00-03A

Chapter 42.52 RCW - Ethics in Public Service

Chapter 40.14 RCW - Preservation and Destruction of Public Records

RCW 42.17.250 et seq. - Public Records Act

WAC 292-110-010 - Executive Ethics Board, Agency Substantive Rules, Use of State Resources

General Records Retention Schedule 17, Electronic Mail

DIS Policy 6.2.2 - Intellectual Property Protection

DIS Policy 2.1.8 - Telecommuting

Offsite Equipment Form

Justification Form/Written Agreement

Telecommuting Form

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